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# Citizens' Bulletin

Volume 12 Number 4 December 1984 \$5/yr.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection



## Peace on Earth



# Citizens' Bulletin

December 1984

Volume 12 Number 4

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## Forestry Bureau offers tree and shrub seedlings

Although spring seems a long way off, orders are now being accepted from Connecticut landowners interested in purchasing tree and shrub seedlings. These seedlings may be used for reforestation, wildlife habitat improvement, Christmas tree plantings, erosion control, or other conservation purposes. To guarantee availability, landowners should write or call the State Forester's Office of the Department of Environmental Protection, or one of the Department of Environmental Protection's field offices to request an order form.

Three seedling programs are available. The first is the "Buffer Bunch Packet," which consists of 20 tree seedlings (10 white pine and 10 Norway spruce) and 30 shrub seedlings (usually 15 silky dogwood and 15 autumn olive). The evergreens provide cover for birds and small animals and the shrubs provide seeds or berries for food. There is no minimum planting acreage requirement, and the seedlings are ideally suited to suburban house lots. The packet is shipped directly to the landowner by United Parcel Service in late March or early April, and its cost is \$14.00. Checks should be made out to "Treasurer, State of Connecticut" when ordering any of the seedling packets.

"The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection is an equal opportunity agency that provides services, facilities and employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, physical handicap, national origin, ancestry, marital status or political beliefs."

The second program, the "Wildlife and Soil Conservation Seedling Packet," consists of 75 tree seedlings (50 white pine and 25 Norway spruce) and 75 shrub seedlings (25 autumn olive, 25 highbush cranberry, and 25 silky dogwood). The price is \$25.00, including United Parcel delivery. At least one-quarter acre of plantable land is needed to qualify for the 150 seedlings provided under this program. Packets are shipped in March or early April.

The third option, "Forest Planting Stock," is available to Connecticut landowners with larger planting areas who intend to establish a forest plantation or a commercial Christmas tree planting or wish to augment existing forest stands on one or more acres (not including house lot). Forest Planting Stock orders for conifer species must be in multiples of 250, and the price is \$65.00 per thousand trees. These seedlings will be shipped to one of the nine delivery points in the state in April, and the landowner will be notified by postcard when the order may be picked up.

Orders for Wildlife and Soil Conservation Packets and Forest Stock require the approval of a Wildlife Biologist, District Conservationist, or Service Forester.

Two restrictions are placed on all orders: They may neither be resold with roots attached nor used for ornamental planting.

Seedlings are quite small when received (from six to 12 inches tall). They grow slowly for the first year or two, and then more rapid growth and development can be expected.

Write or call one of the following offices for an order form:

State Forester's Office, DEP, 165 Capitol Ave.,  
Hartford, CT 06106 566-5348.

DEP Western District Headquarters,  
230 Plymouth Road, Harwinton, CT  
06791 485-0226.

DEP Eastern District Headquarters,  
209 Hebron Road, Marlborough, CT  
06447 295-0523.

State Tree Nursery, RFD #1, Box 23A,  
Voluntown, CT 06384 376-2513. ■





*Sgt. George Barone gets a call to investigate a report of unauthorized shooting.*

# Introducing the CO's

## Protecting our wildlife, protecting our state

*By Catey Sullivan, Environmental Intern*

*This is the first of a series of articles on Connecticut's conservation officers.*

Throughout Connecticut, there exists a singular group of men and women whose job it is to maintain and protect Connecticut's wildlife through an extensive knowledge of hunting, fishing, botany, marine biology, forestry, boating, and law enforcement. The career of the conservation officer is filled with contrasts. Officers must be capable of responding to potential emergencies with speed and confidence, and must possess enough patience to prepare and give lectures concerning their field to school children and civic groups.

Conservation officers must be gentle enough to coax a trapped deer from a frozen body of water or soothe a child who has been lost in the forest, and tough enough to confront a poacher. They must be strong enough to haul a struck deer away from a roadside, yet they must not appear intimidating when interacting with the general public. It is expected that conservation officers deal as effectively with youngsters fishing for the first time in small, secluded ponds as they do with seasoned boaters, depositing lobster pots into the Long Island Sound. They are required to be as well trained in firearms and law enforcement as they are in the environmental sciences. Conservation officers must be tough-minded

toward those who violate the state's wildlife laws, and sensitive to the needs of the environment itself.

Officers run the rapids of the Housatonic in order to stock trout, enforce the boating laws, prevent beaver dams from causing floods, and rescue deer who have been stranded on frozen ponds. A more serious problem for the conservation officer is coping with poaching and "jacklighting" in our state. "Jacklighting" is the practice of temporarily blinding a deer with a light and then shooting it. Jacklighting is always done at night, in remote areas, and (by definition) by criminals. It is for this reason





*Officer Robert Aborn*

that the conservation officers are well-armed and so highly trained.

The job specification for the persons responsible for these tasks states that they must possess "stamina, agility, and endurance." They must undergo extensive character investigations before they assume their positions. They must be willing to work up to three days without relief. Sometimes they are accompanied in their duties by patrol dogs, but more often than not, they work alone.

It should not be assumed that the work of a conservation officer is restricted to remote areas. Frederick J. Pogmore, the Department of Environmental Protection's Director of Law Enforcement, stated that 90 percent of conservation officers' work is done in urban areas.

Their urban responsibilities range from the investigation of pet shops suspected of illegally selling ferrets to patrolling the portion of the Connecticut River which forms the eastern boundary of Hartford.

The following are some of the officers who patrol the northwestern sector of the state. Whether one lives in an urban or a rural area, these are the people to call when experiencing difficulties concerning Connecticut's wildlife and the regulations pertaining to it.

\* \* \*

Robert Aborn has been a conservation officer for almost 19 years. Recently, Aborn has been specializing in the patrol of the area east of the Connecticut River. In addition to maintaining boating

safety standards on the river, Aborn has been responsible for enforcing one of Connecticut's newest boating laws. This law states that all boats which are in Connecticut for more than 60 calendar days in any year must be registered even though they may be from areas outside of this state.

Aborn began working for the State Highway Department in 1957, served four years with the U.S. Coast Guard, and became a conservation officer in 1966.



*Officer Peter Begley*

When not involved with his duties as a conservation officer, he writes. Aborn has been writing poetry and compiling notes on his experiences for a number of years. Another of Mr. Aborn's hobbies is the construction of hearth brooms. He grows, dries, and fashions corn plants into the brooms sometimes found beside New England fireplaces.

Aborn patrols the northwestern segment of Connecticut. He may be reached at 747-2119.

\* \* \*

George J. Barone has a B.A. in biology from Castleton State University in Vermont, with minors in physics, chemistry, and law enforcement. He is also a graduate of the Smith and Wesson Academy, which trains its students in the use of firearms.

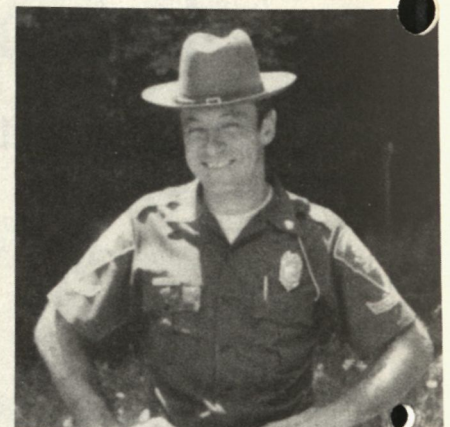
Barone began his extensive studies with the intent of becoming a physician. He switched his emphasis to environmental sciences halfway through his college career. Barone is among the youngest of Connecticut's conservation officers. He is also one

of the department's firearms instructors and assists in teaching this course, which all conservation officers must take. Barone intends to remain a conservation officer until he reaches the age of retirement.

During the preparation of this article, Officer Barone was promoted to the rank of sergeant, and his area of responsibility is now the southwestern district. He can be reached at 438-9508.

\* \* \*

The thing that strikes one when speaking with Peter Begley is his deep sense of purpose. He describes his work as "an all-round effort to try and save the wildlife." While realizing the contribution that one man can make toward achieving this goal may be relatively small, he continues to approach his job with commitment and a sense of responsibility. Begley stated that without the work of the conservation officers, some of Connecticut's ponds would be "fished right out," or that "the first few turkeys (in



*Officer Roy Champagne*

Connecticut's new turkey program) would have been exterminated right away." Begley further stated that it is primarily a lack of knowledge which brings about the destruction of the various types of wildlife in Connecticut. Begley hopes that his presence in the zone which he patrols is a deterrent to those who would otherwise "run rampant" in such activities as deer poaching and illegal fishing.

Each time a position opens within the ranks of the conservation officers, there are usually well over 300 applicants. Begley expressed his



pride in being one of the few who "had the job, and the opportunity to save the wildlife."

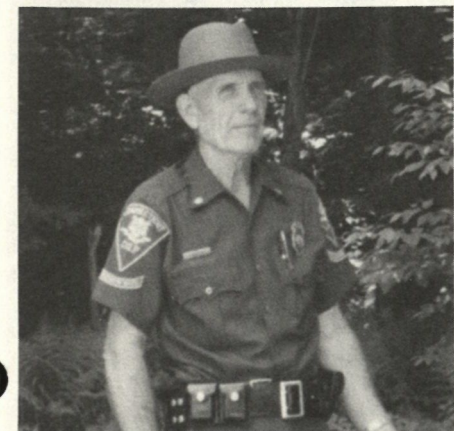
Begley graduated from the University of Massachusetts in 1964. He has been a conservation officer for 16 years. He grew up in New Britain, spending each summer near the Cape in Massachusetts. He stated that this gave him a good perspective on both urban and rural life. During his off-duty hours, Begley works with 4H programs. He raises dairy cows with 4H members, and shows these cows at various fairs. Begley also enjoys motorcycling. He said of motorcycling that "it is a good way to get away."

It is Begley's belief that being a conservation officer is something "one is born into." He has been "intrigued with wildlife as far back as I can remember." Despite the heavy demands of his job, he intends to remain an officer until he retires.

Begley can be reached at 824-5035.

\* \* \*

Roy Champagne says he has always been interested in wildlife. Champagne spent his childhood years on a small farm, and was usually in the company of "many small animals." Champagne said that "when you first start out on the job, it's like a vacation." The vacation does not last long. Champagne's visibility level, like the rest of the conservation officers', is high. He stated that "people associate you with the job. When somebody sees you on the street, it's not you they see, it's the game warden."

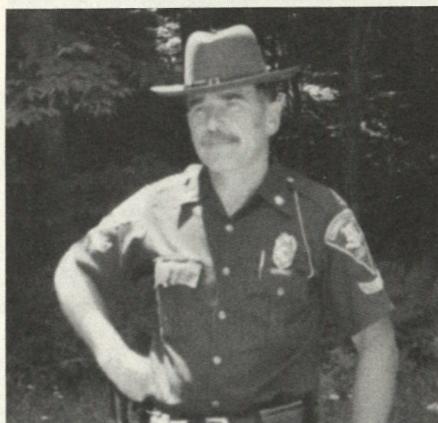


Officer Victor Lovich

Obviously this can be difficult when the people who are most apt to notice the "game warden" are those who have had previous trouble with him. Champagne has successfully dealt with "some harassment" from poachers and illegal fishermen whom he has apprehended.

Champagne stated that his line of work sometimes entailed being called into active duty in the middle of the night. This is indicative of the erratic hours the conservation officer must sometimes keep. Champagne admitted that the hours are one of the drawbacks of being a conservation officer. Despite this, he would not care to pursue any other profession. Champagne's position has become "a way of life" for him. He intends to continue this way of life until he retires.

Champagne can be reached at 653-2207.



Officer William McNamara

\* \* \*

Victor Lovich has been a conservation officer for "too many years to count." Lovich could have retired from his duties ten years ago, but he has chosen to continue with active patrol. He claims his work is "just routine," but his superiors describe his performance as far from that.

Lovich has been described as the one officer capable of stocking the rapids area of the Housatonic River without depositing all of the fish in one area and without tipping the boat over. He is also an expert at imitating and identifying wild bird calls.

Lovich is not one to elaborate on himself, but he can be outspoken



Officer Richard Pogmore

when he perceives inefficiency. When Lovich feels that something is amiss which can be set straight, he does not hesitate to take the appropriate steps. Even among conservation officers, who are not generally considered to be passive individuals, Victor Lovich quickly stands out as a man of action.

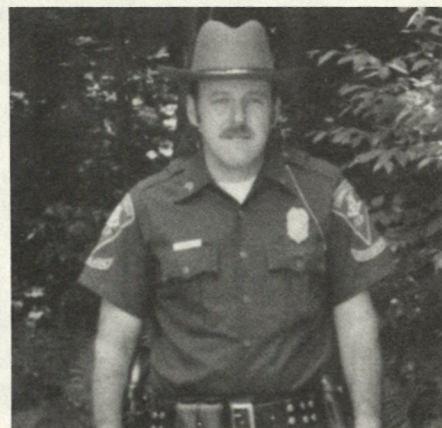
Prior to becoming a conservation officer, Lovich served in World War II, and was employed as a prison guard.

Lovich can be reached at 567-9617.

\* \* \*

William J. McNamara has been a conservation officer since June of 1968. The portion of his career which he enjoys the most is the handling of "nuisance animal complaints." This includes responding to calls concerning deer who have been trapped on frozen lakes and ponds, and to calls concerning sick or injured animals.

McNamara's patrol zone includes the towns of Barkhamsted, Hartland,



Sgt. Joseph Marks



# A Victorian Christmas at Gillette Castle

*By Martha Kelly, Environmental Intern*

A visitor to Gillette Castle in the Christmas season will be ushered into a feast for the senses. The castle staff, led by Unit Manager Donald Grant, has planned a Christmas celebration featuring the sights, sounds, and even the scents of a Victorian Christmas.

The castle, a massive, 24-room structure, is decorated inside and out in the style appropriate to the building's period. It was completed in 1919 as the retirement home of actor William Gillette. Garlands and wreaths -- all of which have been fashioned from live materials gathered in the surrounding park by castle and park and forest personnel -- adorn the doors, windows, and interior. Candles flicker in windows; a fire crackles in the living room's enormous fireplace. The large scale of the room demands a special tree -- a nearly 20-foot red cedar is traditional.

Bright red apples and poinsettias provide a counterpoint to the greenery and add their fragrance to that of the evergreen boughs. Fruits figure prominently in the dining room, where a Hospitality Tree is the focal point. This tower of fresh fruit, topped by a pineapple, serves as the centerpiece on the dining table.

Each room displays some evidence of the Christmas season. The decorations are the work of many hands. The castle's staff of four permanent and several seasonal workers prepares the wreaths and 175 feet of garlands over several weeks' time and decorates the castle in the week before Thanksgiving. The abundance of poinsettias are furnished by the staff of Harkness State Park. A special contribution, in the form of Victorian tree ornaments, is made by Ed and Dottie Wocl,



Tom O'Brien photos

*The castle's two-story living room is lavishly decorated with live greenery gathered from the surrounding state park.*



proprietors of Ye Olde Fashioned Christmas Shoppe of East Haddam.

Each year the Wocls decorate the castle's tree in Victorian style. Traditional trimmings are Burgundy velvet bows, accented with white lace and interspersed with a variety of delicate ornaments, including porcelain-faced dolls, jesters, parasols, fans, and musical instruments.

Entertainment is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. each Saturday and Sunday during the Christmas season, which extends from Thanksgiving weekend to Sunday, December 16th. In the past, programs have included the Johnsonville Singers, who perform in period costume, and the Bellringers of the Deep River Chancel Bell Choir. The array of groups offering to perform has grown over the past three years, and Don Grant hopes that it may be possible to schedule two performances for each Sunday this season. If so, performances will

Martha Kelly



*Unit manager Don Grant has planned the castle's Christmas celebration.*

be at 1:30 and 2:30. Although the castle is large and can accommodate many visitors at once, it may be wise to plan on arriving early -- 1600 to 1800 visitors per day is usual during the Christmas season. The Christmas celebration, which was initiated by Parks and Recreation Director William Miller, has grown more popular in each of its three seasons.

The castle will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission to the castle is \$1.00 for adults and \$.50 for children six to 12 years old. Younger children are admitted free. For up-to-date information on programming, visitors are advised to check state and local newspapers, or phone 526-2336.

After the 16th of December, the castle will close its doors for a long winter's nap, but the surrounding trails remain open for hiking and the castle's spectacular view of the Connecticut River is a year-round treat. ■



*Dressed in period costumes, the Johnsonville Singers entertain castle visitors with traditional carols.*



# DEP's Christmas Tree Program

## Making sure a renewable resource stays that way

*Text and Photos by Robert Paier*

If you have some land, some time, and a feeling for it, you might consider growing Christmas trees. In the Connecticut area, there are approximately one million households, and half of those are considered potential Christmas tree customers. It is estimated that last year 250,000 live trees were sold in Connecticut. Of those trees, many were imported from other states and Canada. There is indeed a market for locally-grown, fresh-cut trees. And, if you decide to try your hand at raising and selling Christmas trees, Dick Raymond of DEP's Bureau of Forestry, manager of Goodwin State Forest, and one of 20 foresters currently in the field, will tell you how to do it right, in a way that is consistent with the requirements of the soil, the climate, the species of tree you are considering, and in a way that will give you most return on your labor and investment. "If you're going to do it," says Dick Raymond, "we think you should do it right."

**James L. Goodwin**  
State Forest

James L. Goodwin State Forest in Hampton, Connecticut, is the showplace of DEP's Bureau of Forestry. It has been set up as a center of information and research



for forest-related study. In 1983, more than 7,000 visitors made use of the center's facilities. Demonstrations, lectures, and conferences related to forestry were held, all with the goal of "doing it right." Among the many programs carried on at that forest is an eight-acre Christmas tree plantation, which is actively managed as a demonstration area and which in 1983 generated \$6,000 in revenues on its own. The purpose of this area is to explore methods of growing and harvesting Christmas trees correctly and to communicate that information to those who are interested. The reason for doing that is simple: any activity which is

done with an awareness of and respect for the entire ecosystem benefits everybody, and activity which ignores and exploits that ecosystem hurts us all.

### Connecticut's Forest Land

Connecticut is a state of many surprises. Most people, long-time residents included, are surprised to learn that while Connecticut ranks second in the country (after Alaska) in per capita income and fourth in population density, almost 60 percent of the state is woodland. Of Connecticut's total 3.1 million acres, 1.8 million acres are forested. That forest land, according to State Forester Robert Garrepy of DEP's Bureau of Forestry, is divided as follows: 250,000 acres are owned by the state, of which 200,000 are under the direct authority of DEP; 140,000 acres are owned by water companies; and the greatest part by far, 1.5 million acres, is "NPF," Non-industrial Private Forest. There is relatively little corporate ownership of forest land in Connecticut, with the largest holding being slightly more than 1,000 acres. Federal property, controlled by the Corps of Engineers, totals about 5,000 acres of woodland.



The correct management of that and, management for the greatest productivity consistent with environmental requirements, is the direction in which DEP's Bureau of Forestry is working. Because we're dealing here with 60 percent of our state, that's a big and very important job.

### **Our Renewable Natural Resource**

One of the most significant concepts in forestry is that woodlands constitute a renewable natural resource. What that means is that with the proper management, it is reasonable to expect our forests will provide us with wood products, recreation, adequate supplies of water, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic beauty indefinitely. The goal of forest management is to ensure that that is just what happens.

Left on its own, the forest is a self-perpetuating system.

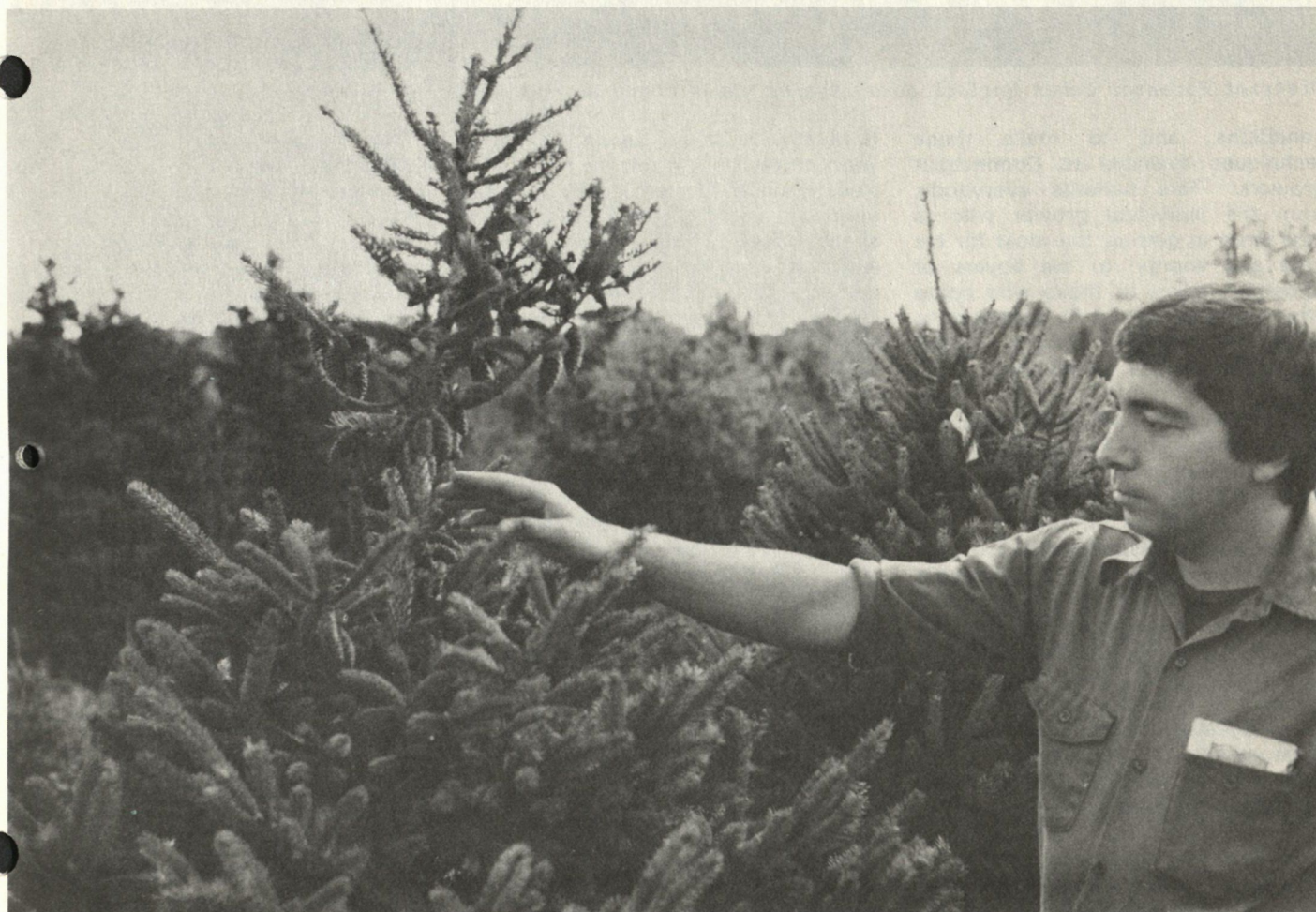
Management in a completely natural state would, of course, not be necessary. However, because people use a forest for a variety of purposes, some form of active management is certainly desirable, and probably necessary. In order to extract timber from our forests, it is necessary to be aware of all the complexities involved, so that action taken will not adversely affect the totality of the forest ecosystem. A single action taken affects everything in the forest. Forest management involves an understanding of all elements that go into making a balanced, ecologically correct decision in order to achieve a desired objective. This ecological equation involves such factors as soil, temperature, tree species, and rainfall, as well as more abstract elements, such as current legislation, tax structures, and the market for a particular product.

As can be readily seen, good forest management is not easy, and

it requires continuous decision-making and clear perception of both natural and commercial requirements. It is said that in general, the goal of good forestry is to imitate nature, but in such a way that the growth cycle is accelerated and the selection process is improved. Sometimes it is found that a process not found in nature works, has no harmful effects, and brings about the desired end. When in doubt, however, the general practice of forestry is to follow nature.

### **The Christmas Tree Program**

At Goodwin State Forest, under the direction of Forester Dick Raymond, the state provides information, research, and assistance to Connecticut residents who are involved in the growing and harvesting of Christmas trees. The purpose of this program is to explore management techniques which are most compatible with local growing



Forester Dick Raymond, manager of Goodwin State Forest: "It takes seven or eight years to realize a profit on Christmas trees."





*District Forester Huber Hurlock demonstrates the art and science of shaping a Christmas tree.*

conditions, and to make those techniques available to Connecticut growers. This benefits everybody, from the individual grower who is interested in getting the most for his time and energy, to the buyers of Christmas trees, to those who come after us, and who will continue to appreciate the beauty and productivity of our woodlands.

Dick Raymond has been with the DEP's Bureau of Forestry for five years, following his graduation from the University of Maine in Orono where he majored in forestry. One of Raymond's responsibilities is the day-to-day functioning of Goodwin State Forest, which he accomplishes under the supervision of District Forester Huber Hurlock, a veteran of 12 years with the Bureau of Forestry. Both men are knowledgeable in the most current management techniques and dedicated to keeping Connecticut's woodlands for future generations.

"Christmas tree growing is a good business," says Raymond. "Our purpose is to show people how to raise the right trees in the right way for the land they have available."

Generally, it takes seven or eight years to realize a profit on Christmas trees. An important part of the information that prospective growers should have is that they should expect to put in at least four days per acre per year on maintaining the crop. If that maintenance and care is not performed, then the crop will probably not be successful.

### **What The Grower Should Know**

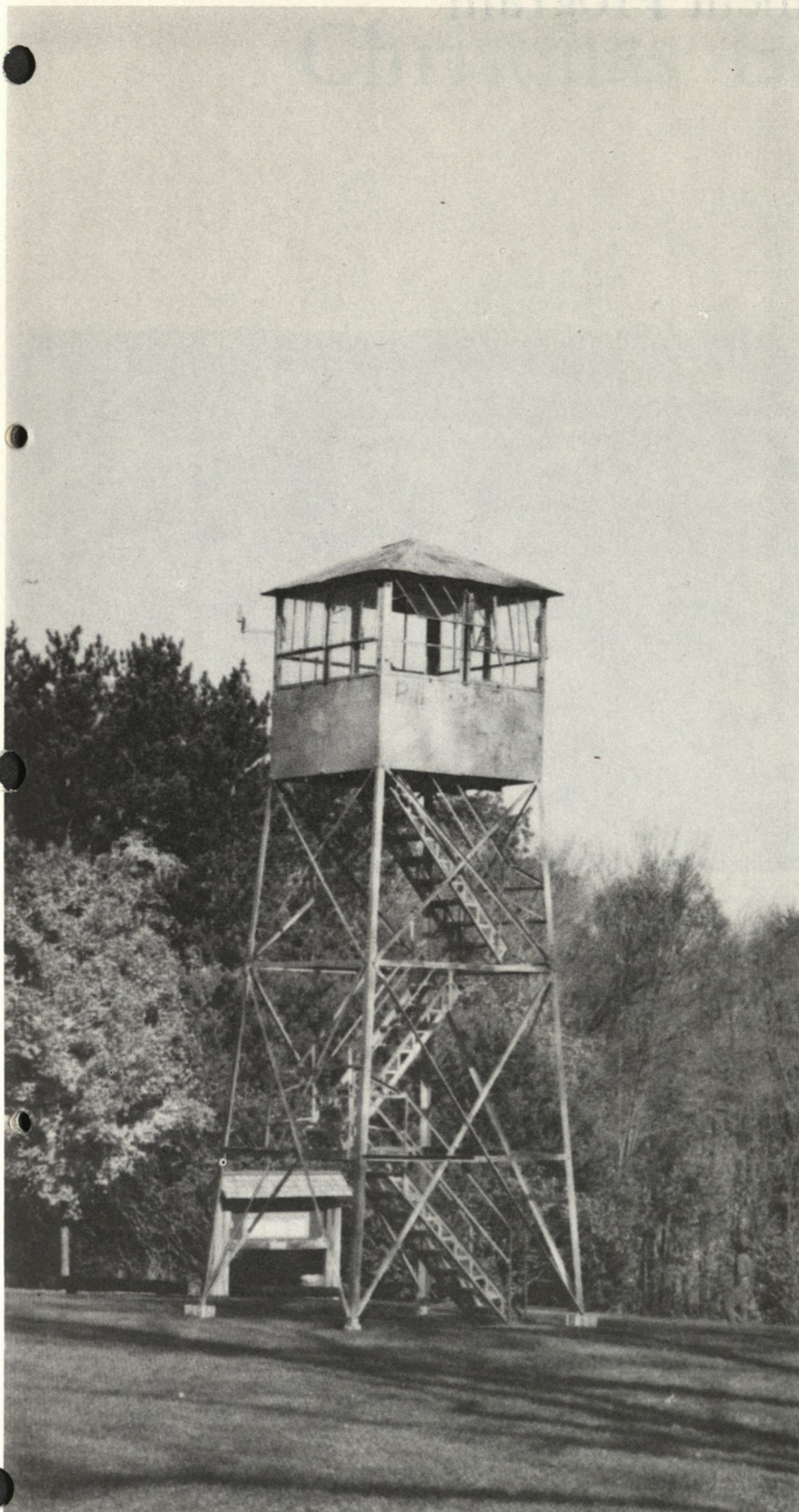
To grow Christmas trees for the greatest economic return and to maintain the integrity of the environment, there are a number of factors which must be taken into consideration. Site selection is the first of these. Trees should be grown where the soil is suitable for the chosen species, where there is adequate drainage and air movement, and where enough sunlight is available. Different species of trees have different needs. Also, accessibility is important, and decisions must be made as to how finally the trees will be harvested, whether individually on a retail basis, or in greater numbers on a wholesale basis.

There are many species of Christmas trees grown in Connecticut. Some of those species include: white spruce; Douglas fir; Colorado blue spruce; eastern white pine; Scots or Scotch pine; Fraser fir; and balsam fir. Each species has particular characteristics, which make it more or less desirable as a crop. One of the areas of research at Goodwin State Forest is to determine which tree is in fact most suitable for Connecticut growers. An excellent species, says Raymond, is the Fraser fir, which stays green and moist after cutting and doesn't shed needles easily. It is becoming as popular as balsam fir.

Scotch pine, on the other hand, while fast-growing, is a difficult species for use as a Christmas tree. "You practically have to come out every day and see what's bothering it," says Raymond, which means that the grower will probably find himself putting out more labor than anticipated with this tree.

Other aspects of Christmas tree culture in which Raymond makes recommendations include fertilizers,





The all-but-obsolete watch tower; forest fires are now spotted largely by aircraft.

fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and animal and disease control. Also, there are techniques used to ensure that trees grow straight and conical, the way people expect Christmas trees to look. This shaping, done with garden shears, clippers, or special knives, is an art in itself, requiring the right cuts at the right time.

What quickly becomes apparent is that while growing Christmas trees may be a very profitable enterprise, unless it is done with the benefit of a lot of expertise, things can go wrong. For that reason, anyone planning such an endeavor would do well to check with DEP's Bureau of Forestry before going very far. They'll show you how to do it right.

For further information on Christmas tree growing, contact DEP Bureau of Forestry, 165 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT 06106, telephone 566-5348; or James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, RR 1, Box 100, Potter Rd., No. Windham, CT 06256, telephone 455-9534. ■



# Coastal Management Program

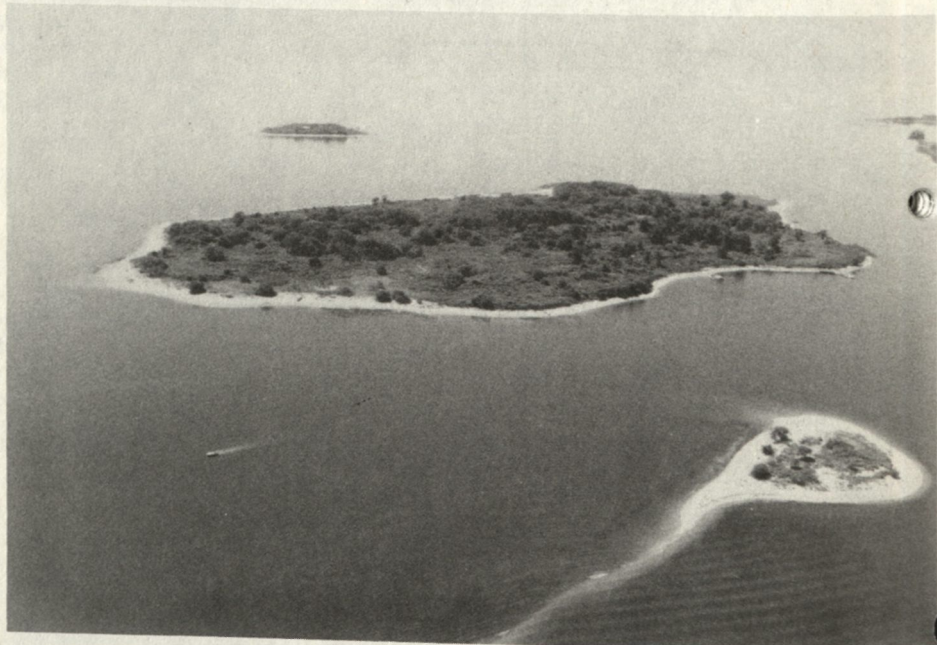
## A Bird's-Eye View of Coastal Wildlife Refuge

*By Diane Giampa,  
Public Participation  
Coordinator, CAM*

In a previous issue of the Citizens' Bulletin, we reported on legislation that was introduced in Congress to establish a 160-acre National Wildlife Refuge made up of five Connecticut coastal islands: Chimon and Sheffield Islands off Norwalk; Faulkner's Island near Guilford; and Ram Island at the mouth of the Mystic River and Milford Point. The legislation, which authorizes \$2.5 million for acquisition of the refuge, was passed by the House this fall. When it reached the Senate, it was attached as an amendment to the Wetlands Loan Extension Act by Tennessee Republican Howard Baker Jr. on behalf of Senator Lowell Weicker Jr. of Connecticut. The Wetlands Bill was signed in Fairfield, Connecticut, on October 25, 1984. ■



*Milford Point is a ten-acre barrier beach at the mouth of the Housatonic River in Milford.*



*Seventy-acre Chimon Island contains the largest heron rookery on Long Island Sound.*

Dan Rothenberg photos



# Christmas Holly

## Remembering the old religion

By Nancy N. Kriz, President, Connecticut Association of  
Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions

There are in excess of 300 species of holly in the world. Several of them, those with red fruit, are referred to as the Christmas hollies. They have been traditionally used as decorations during the holiday season.

Hollies range in size from small shrubs to large trees. In North America, there exist 14 native tree and two native shrub species. Connecticut's climate supports the growth of native American holly (*Ilex opaca*) which is sometimes called "white holly." English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), a native of Southern Europe, has been transplanted and several varieties are commonly found in gardens throughout the state. Horticulturalists have developed the larger-leaved, larger-berried varieties of English holly sold by florists here at Christmastime.

One might think that the word "holly" was derived from the word "holy," but there is actually no relationship between the two. Holly is derived from the word "holen," the old English noun to identify the holly plant.

Holly played an ancient role in the pagan celebrations of winter in many European countries. Some early peoples believed that bringing holly indoors would reduce the harshness of winter. Others, believing that holly would keep witches out of their homes, hung it over doorways and near chimney flues to prevent witches from entering from those points.

The Druids, an early religious sect who inhabited Great Britain, worshipped (among other things) the sun. They felt that holly was favored by the sun because it remained green throughout the winter months, never losing the leaves like other plants. Holly, therefore, became sacred to them.

Pliny the Elder, a Roman historian who lived during the First Century A.D., studied the Druids and found that the sect believed that holly protected homes from evil spirits and from lightning (a natural phenomenon they greatly feared). The Druids also thought that a household would be ruled by the first person to bring holly into the house each year -- either the husband or the wife!

The early Romans held a winter festival called Saturnalia. This holiday began on December 17th and continued until December 24th. The Christian Church adopted the day after Saturnalia, December 25th, as Christmas Day to compete with and to counteract this pagan celebration. During Saturnalia, holly branches were presented by one family to another as a token of friendship.

As Christianity began to spread, most pagan rites and beliefs were rejected. Some superstitions and traditions, however, were merely altered to fit Christian doctrine.

Such was the case with holly. It was said that holly plants sprouted from the footsteps of Christ. The

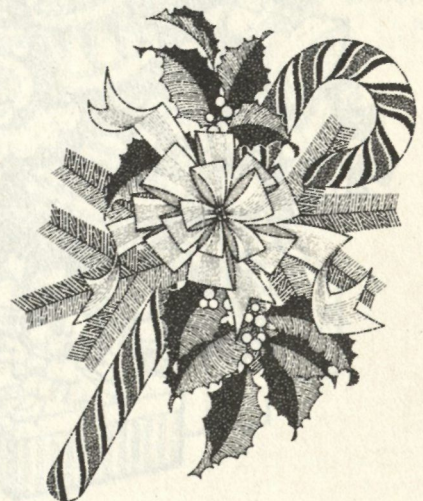
crown of thorns was thought to have been made of holly. The white berries of that particular species of holly were believed to have turned red from the blood of Christ. The thorns and red berries of holly began to symbolize Christ's pain and suffering. The initial use of holly in the decorative manner has been attributed to the first Roman Christians.

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# Gift Suggestions

Some nice things  
to put under  
the tree

By  
Este Stifel,  
Environmental  
Intern



As weather gets colder and thoughts drift indoors to wood fires and wintertime hobbies, new ideas for Christmas gifts seem harder and harder to come up with. This Christmas may be the perfect opportunity to try a novel approach to Christmas shopping. Many of Connecticut's nature centers and museums have book and gift shops bursting with good ideas for Christmas. While the rest of the family enjoys a few hours of educational fun, you may take time to shop peacefully for the whole family.

These gift ideas are great for several reasons; they are excellent educational tools, because the learning that takes place is effortless. Also, in most cases, the profits are used to keep the centers running smoothly, to keep animals fed, and to improve educational programs.



The American Indian Archaeological Institute (AIAI) has a gift shop full of unique, personalized gifts. The staff of AIAI travels widely in search of unusual, handmade Indian craftwork. Tammy Turbell is a Mohawk potter who creates elegant hand-burnished black pots. Each pot seems to be a distinct individual with a personality all its own. There is a wide selection of one-of-a-kind silver and turquoise pieces of jewelry, designed by Navajo, Hopi, and Zuni crafts people of the southwest. Practical gift ideas include Mohawk sweet grass and ash splint baskets in graceful designs. Birch bark canoes and teepees in miniature, as well as deerskin pouches and braided head-bands have been imported from Saskatchewan, Canada. Of course, there is also a wide range of books for all levels of interest.

For a Christmas book that is more than "just a book," The Connecticut Walk Book may be the perfect gift, especially for hiking enthusiasts. It is a comprehensive book about walks all over Connecticut. This book has just been published in its 14th edition, and describes over 500 miles of the Blue Blazed Trail System, which is developed and maintained by volunteer trailsmen. This guide contains information about trails, points of historical and geological interest, and scenic views along the trail.

Although The Walk Book has maps included, more detailed topographical maps may be obtained from the Department of Environmental Protection's Natural Resource Center. These maps, designed with three colors for easy reference, show contours and complement the descriptions given in The Walk Book. The Natural Resource Center also has many other maps, orthoquad and bedrock maps, for example, for the hunter or hiker who wants to understand the land and gain a greater appreciation of the makeup of the soil. These maps can indicate how bedrock structure or watershed direction affect the vegetation, which in turn affects the animal life. This unit also has books that are oriented toward the outdoorsman. There is a guidebook on plants called Rare and Endangered Species of Connecticut and their Habitats. There are also several very useful

books for fishermen. The Trophic Classifications of 70 Connecticut Lakes is a survey of lakes and ponds of the state that shows which fish live at each depth in different bodies of water.

The Mystic Marinelife Aquarium gift shop is well-stocked with quality and imagination. The kinds of gifts range from stocking-stuffers to very special handmade sculptures. The stuffed animal display catches most people's eyes, with its adorable seals and sea lions waiting so patiently for someone to take them home. There are mobiles and kites hanging from the ceiling and posters on the walls. A wide range of jewelry, aquatic in origin, is at the counter and stone and porcelain sculpture is tucked in the corner. Although all of the profits from the gift shop and bookstore are used to feed the animals and improve the educational programs, there is a special promotional T-shirt that has become a "best seller." This special T-shirt has been designed to promote public awareness of the Aquarium's plans for a rehabilitation center for stranded mammals.

The book store, located directly above the gift shop, is filled with a great assortment of topics and titles. There are, of course, many books related directly to the exhibits in the Aquarium. But the book store goes much further.

There are books on most fields related to the water. There is a book titled Marine Fish Larvae next to Practical Shellfish Farming, both of which are under "Fisheries and Aquaculture." Other headings include "Invertebrates," "Biology and Evolution," "Hobbies," i.e., Game Bird Carving and a section on "Aquatic Cuisine," as well as a children's corner.

The Thames Science Center is another good example of a nature center with more to offer. It has a book shop with Christmas gift ideas, such as The Curious Naturalist for children and 25 Birding Areas in Connecticut for adults. They also have a large array of science kits for kids. The "Audible Audubon" is a great idea as well as a perfect choice for people who love gadgets. It emits bird calls so one can recognize calls in the wild and gives information on their habits. This gift

shop also has a large supply of bird feeders for those who enjoy watching the antics of the various avian winter residents of Connecticut.

And finally, if you want to give a Christmas gift that is sure to please year round, may we suggest a subscription to DEP's Citizens' Bulletin. We think it's the best way to say "Merry Christmas" all year long.

#### Addresses

American Indian Archaeological Institute, P.O. Box 260, Washington, CT 06793, 868-0518

Connecticut Walk Book, Connecticut Forest and Park Association Inc., 1010 Main St., P.O. Box 8537, East Hartford, Ct 06108, 289-3637

The Natural Resources Center, Department of Environmental Protection, 165 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT 06106, 566-7719

Cachalot Bookshop, Mystic Marinelife Aquarium, Mystic, CT 06355, 536-9631

Thames Science Center, Gallows Lane, New London, CT 06320 442-0391

Audubon Center, Holland Brook Center, Glastonbury, CT 633-8402

Audubon Center, Greenwich, CT 869-5272

Connecticut Audubon Society, Fairfield, CT 259-6003

Northeast Audubon Center, Sharon, CT 364-0520 ■



## The Weasel in Connecticut

Just when you thought  
it was safe to  
go back in the  
mulberry bush...

### GENERAL

Weasels are found throughout New England in abundant numbers. Of the two species of weasels commonly found in Connecticut, the long-tailed weasel (*Mustela frenata*) is more readily seen than the short-tailed weasel (*Mustela erminea*); both are related to mink, marten, fishers, otters, and skunks, all members of the family Mustelidae.

Weasels are small, slender, long-bodied animals with small heads and rounded ears. The long-tailed weasel is 11 to 17 inches long; its tail makes up from two to four inches of its total length. In both species the males are larger than the females. Weasels have dark-brown upper parts with white to yellowish-white under parts during the summer. On the long-tailed weasel, the brown coloration tends to extend down to the feet and toes whereas the short-tailed weasel usually has white extending from the toes to the lower legs. Both species have a brown tail with black tip. In

Irene Vandermolen photos: short-tailed weasel



Weasels nest in abandoned rodent dens, hollow logs, and crevices in ledges and stone walls.





The weasel secures its prey by striking at the base of the skull and holding the victim till the struggling ceases.





*Weasels are alert and curious, and have excellent sight, hearing, and smell.*

October through November molting occurs and, except for the black tail tip, both weasels take on a completely white coloration for the winter. The long-tailed weasel may remain brown through the winter, especially where the climate is mild. The spring molt takes place from late February through April, after which the weasels regain their brown summer fur.

#### REPRODUCTION

Breeding occurs during the summer -- the long-tailed weasel in July and August and the short-tailed weasel somewhat earlier. Both species are monogamous, so the male and female only breed with one individual. After breeding, the implantation of the embryo is delayed; this is typical of all mustelids. About seven months later, the embryo begins to grow and the gestation period ends in 270-280 days. A litter of four to nine young are born in April or May. At birth,

the young are blind, naked, and helpless. They are well-furred at three weeks, have teeth at four weeks, and their eyes open at five weeks. Weaning begins soon after their eyes have opened and by November the young are almost full-grown. Soon after the young are weaned, the family unit will start to disperse. Young females can breed at three to four months, while males are not sexually mature until they are about one year old. A weasel's life span is about five years in captivity and probably less in the wild. These animals are generally solitary except during the mating season and while rearing their young.

#### HABITS

Short-tailed weasels can be found in brushy areas and thickets in forested habitats where water is nearby. Long-tailed weasels prefer open woodlands, brushland, and rocky areas close to water. Burrows are made in abandoned rodent dens,

hollow logs, and crevices in ledges and stone walls and typically have several entrances. The sleeping and birthing chamber is lined with grass, leaves, and fur from their prey.

Weasels are carnivorous and prey on mice, rats, moles, rabbits, chipmunks, frogs, snakes, earthworms, birds and their eggs. Daily, they consume up to 30 to 40 percent of their body weight.

Weasels are alert, curious predators that are active throughout the year, and although mainly nocturnal, they may be seen during the day. Thorough and persistent in their search for food, they may travel two to three miles in a single night. Their normal home range is about 30 to 40 acres.

These voracious hunters secure their prey by striking at the base of the skull and pressing their bodies against the victim until the struggling ceases. They may kill more than



they can eat, but will usually store the surplus for times when food is scarce.

Weasels have good senses of sight, hearing, and smell and produce vocalizations that include hisses, screeches, purrs, and chatters. They will swim and climb, especially when in pursuit of prey. When annoyed or frightened, weasels may emit a foul, musty odor from scent glands located by the anus.

### BENEFITS

Weasels are valuable predators, since they feed heavily on small rodents often considered human pests. Their effect on keeping rodent populations in check usually outweighs the occasional damage they may cause. Weasels are important furbearers.

### MANAGEMENT OF NUISANCES

Weasels do not usually cause many nuisance problems to the landowner. However, they may occasionally "raid" a poultry house or a rabbit hutch. Weasel predation can

be identified by examining the carcasses of their prey. They kill by biting at the base of the skull or under the wing and they usually eat the back of the head and the neck. Also the tops of eggs are bitten off and the contents eaten.

The best and most permanent solution to a problem like this is to secure and maintain poultry and animal houses to prevent a weasel from gaining entrance. Heavy gauge, mesh wire can be used to cover up holes on such structures and will keep most potential predators out.

Weasels have a curious nature and can be captured in live traps baited with fresh meat. These animals should be released as soon as possible in suitable habitat, at least five miles away. However, live trapping alone will not always solve this problem, since other individuals may move into the area.

### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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(Wildlife Bureau Information Series No. TA-5-12)

The Technical Assistance Information Series is 75 percent funded by Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration -- the Pittman-Robertson (P-R) Program. The P-R Program provides funding through an excise tax on the sale of sporting firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. The remaining 25 percent of the funding is matched by the Connecticut Wildlife Bureau. ■

# Trailside Botanizing

## Eastern Larch

By G. Winston Carter

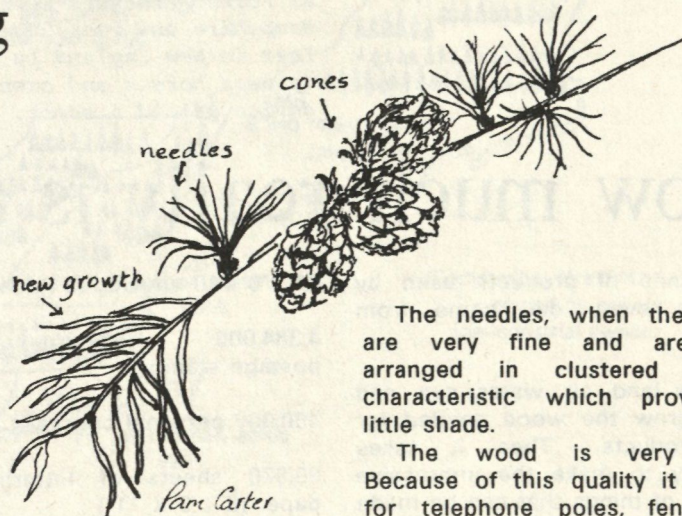
The eastern larch is one of the few cone-bearing trees in North America which loses all of its needles in the fall and produces new ones in the spring. The bald cypress of the south is our only other conifer to have this characteristic.

The larch is also known as tamarack and sometimes hackmatack. It grows in a variety of habitats but prefers the soils of bogs and swamps.

During the winter months, the larch appears barren and corpse-like, but in spring the tree gives a completely different impression. The tree is brightened by the appearance of small but colorful flowers which develop before the needles. Both male and female flowers are formed on the same tree on the older branchlets. The male is

bright-yellow and spherical, while the female is red with green tips and is oblong. Despite the colorful appearance of the flowers, they are wind-pollinated and do not attract insects. This fact continues to puzzle botanists.

The small, globular female cone matures in about one year. This is unlike the pine cone which requires two years for the same process, expanding to a much larger size.



The needles, when they appear, are very fine and are usually arranged in clustered tufts, a characteristic which provides for little shade.

The wood is very durable. Because of this quality it is valued for telephone poles, fence posts, railroad ties, and other rough construction work. Indians made use of the roots of tamarack for sewing together strips of birch bark in making their canoes.

The seeds are the preferred food of crossbills and purple finches. Ruffed grouse consume the buds and seeds and blue jays and robins use this tree for cover and as a nesting site. Chipmunks and mice consume a majority of the seeds, while white-tailed deer browse on the young trees. ■



# Tree Farmer of the Year Visits Connecticut

“Walk your  
roads, smell  
your woods,  
and see  
your trees  
respond.”

Les Barden

Danielle Pastor



Tree farmer Leslie O. Barden and his two oxen, Star and Duke, demonstrate log hauling techniques in Bushnell Park as part of National Forest Products Week. Barden owns a 200-acre tree farm in New Hampshire and was judged the 1984 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year in New England by the American Forest Institute. He regularly uses horses and oxen to haul logs from his woods on a sled-like device called a scoot.

## How much really is a cord of wood?

Thousands of products used by Americans every day come from wood.

It takes land, air, water, sun, and time to grow the wood needed for these products. Then it takes technology to make the impressive quantities of things that can be made from a cord of wood today.

Different products require different kinds of trees but, for general information, a cord of wood will yield the following quantities of products:\*

7,500,000 toothpicks

1,000 - 2,000 lbs. of paper  
(depending on the process)

942 one-lb. books

61,370 #10 envelopes (standard)

4,384,000 commemorative-size  
postage stamps

460,000 personal checks

89,870 sheets of letterhead bond  
paper (8 1/2 X 11")

1,200 copies of the National  
Geographic

2,700 copies of the average daily  
paper (35 pages)

250 copies of the Sunday New York  
Times

30 Boston rockers

12 dining room tables (each table  
seats eight)

Building an average 1800 square-foot  
home uses 10,000 board-feet of  
lumber, equivalent to 20 cords.

### Bark, By-Products, and Energy

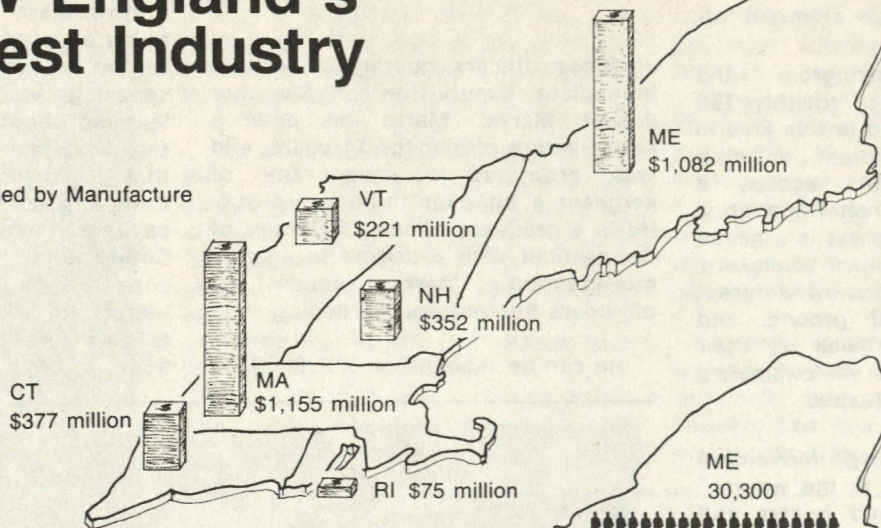
Twenty percent of a cord of wood may be bark. Bark, wastewood, and pulping liquors provide more than half of the US forest industry's energy needs. Bark is also a source of many chemicals and is used for mulches and soil conditioners. By-products from wood also end up as vitamins, plastics, explosives, photographic film, toothpaste, and pharmaceuticals, to name a few items.

\* One cord equals a pile of wood 4  
X 4' X 8' - 80 cubic feet of solid  
wood.

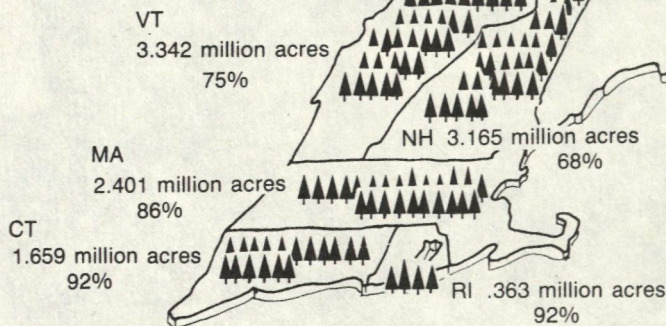
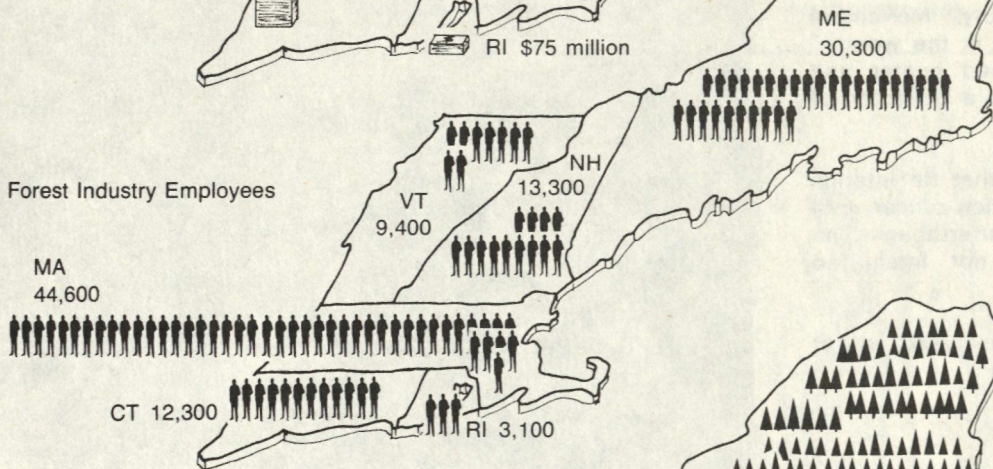


# New England's Forest Industry

Value Added by Manufacture



Forest Industry Employees

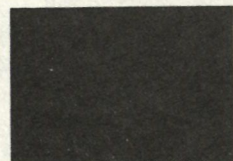


Commercial forest land owned by private non-industrial owners.

Forest Land Area in New England 1770-1979

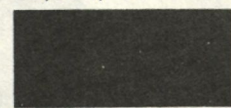
Total New England land area = 40,314,000 acres

36,400,000 acres



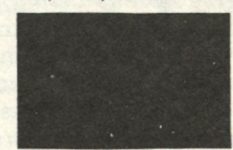
1770

23,536,000 acres



1880

30,984,000 acres



1979



# CO's

From page 5

New Hartford, Torrington, and Winchester, an area of roughly 150 square miles. Included in this area is the People's State Forest, an area which in itself could occupy a conservation officer's attention on a full time basis. The forest is a haven for summertime picnickers, fishermen, and campers. The forest covers 30 acres of ground, and welcomes people as well as their pets, and William McNamara's services here are invaluable.

When not on duty, McNamara "generally likes to be in the woods." He is an accomplished hunter and fisherman, as well as a collector of antique bottles.

McNamara stated that he intends to remain a conservation officer until he retires. As an afterthought, he stated that he did not intend to retire.

McNamara can be reached at 379-8677.

\* \* \*

Richard Pogmore was a conservation officer for nine years, and a Pennsylvanian dairy farmer for eight. In August of 1983, he returned to Connecticut and resumed his career as a conservation officer. Pogmore patrols throughout Avon, Bloomfield, Hartford, West Hartford, Windsor, and Farmington. Geographically, this is a unique zone in that it includes regions as rural as Penwood Park and Talcott Mountain and as urban as downtown Hartford.

Pogmore is active on the river patrol during the summer months and concentrates on enforcing hunting regulations during the winter months. He is dedicated to a life out of doors. Pogmore claims that he left farming partially because the prices for dairy beef prices were the same in 1976 as they were in 1946, and partially because he missed Connecticut and being a conservation officer. In 10 years Pogmore will have completed over a quarter of a century of outdoor work. At that point, he plans on retiring.

Richard Pogmore can be reached at 423-8561.

\* \* \*

These officers operate under the immediate supervision of Sergeant Joseph Marks. Marks has been a conservation officer for 11 years, and was promoted to the rank of sergeant a bit over three years ago. He is a graduate of the University of Connecticut with a degree in wildlife management. Marks spends his off-hours hunting and gardening.

He can be reached at 672-6068.

The turnover rate in the northwestern sector is minimal — being a conservation officers appears to be a lifetime commitment. In speaking with these people, and learning about their backgrounds and qualifications, it became apparent that the enforcement of Connecticut's wildlife laws is in quite capable hands. The state of Connecticut is proud of its conservation officers. We are all better off because the conservation officers are there, on the job, 24 hours a day.

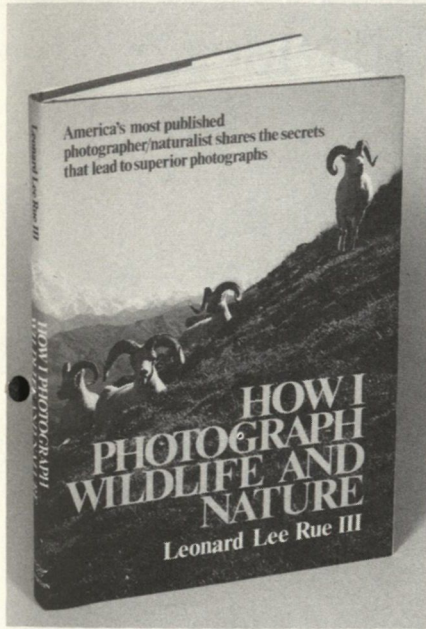


Margot Callahan

Christmas at the Governor's Mansion, 1983: Helping to trim the tree, a gift of the Christmas Tree Growers Association of Connecticut, are guests from Channel 8's "Thursday's Child."



# Book Review



## How-to Book by Master Wildlife Photographer

By  
Leslie Lewis

Regular readers of the Citizens' Bulletin are familiar with the wonderful animal photographs by Leonard Lee Rue III and his family. Chances are that you wished you could take pictures like that. Now, thanks to Lenny Rue, it's possible that you can.

How I Photograph Wildlife and Nature (W.W. Norton Company) is the title of Rue's latest book, and it's a beauty. He begins with chapters on the basics of photography and equipment, with helpful information for both the beginner and advanced camera buff. He then breaks down his "how-to" section by subject: sciences, wildflowers, insects, reptiles and amphibians, birds,

mammals, zoos, studios, and underwater photography. There is a chapter on selling photos, as well as a list of suppliers of services and equipment. Throughout the book, as one might expect, are examples of Rue's distinctive pictures.

As with most photography books, this one covers the basics of composition, the pros and cons of different types of equipment, flash techniques, and lighting. What makes it so useful to the person who is interested in nature are Rue's observations about the plants and animals he works with. He is as much a naturalist as a photographer (one reason his work is so fine) and he makes the point that you must

understand your subject to get the best possible artistic effect.

Leonard Lee Rue III is one of the premiere wildlife photographers in America. In How I Photograph Wildlife and Nature, he generously shares his years of knowledge with the public. If you are looking for a Christmas present for that special "shutterbug," consider this book. It is bound to give the recipient information, inspiration, and a great deal of pleasure.

A copy of this book, personally autographed by the author, may be obtained by sending \$19.95 to: Leonard Lee Rue III, R.D. #3, Box 31, Blairstown, New Jersey 07825. ■



To all our readers,  
A very Merry Christmas.  
From the staff of the CITIZENS' BULLETIN





Irene Vandermolen

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